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SIPDIS

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NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT PAPER REPORTS ZIMBABWE WILL ACCEPT
BIOTECH FOOD AID

- ¶1. According to a front-page, above-the-fold report in the September 6 edition of the government-owned Herald, President Mugabe has ruled that Zimbabwe will accept food aid that may contain biotech products. However, the President added that that such food relief will be subject to special shipping, milling and distribution requirements.
- ¶2. Under the banner headline "GM Food aid gets nod: Conditions for imports set; Shipment to be quarantined" the government-controlled daily "The Herald" (09/06) carried the following story:
- ¶3. "The government, which previously indicated it would reject genetically modified food, yesterday (September 5) announced it will accept the food aid but on condition that it will be quarantined to allow Zimbabwe's agricultural scientists to closely monitor its shipment, milling and distribution in the country. . . However, an understanding was reached yesterday between the government and World Food Program (WFP) whereby the WFP will inform Zimbabwe when it would be bringing in the food. The UN food agency will also import non-GMO maize, beans and other foodstuffs. . . A UN humanitarian assistance team, led by WFP director Mr. Tim (sic) Morris, held separate meetings with President Mugabe, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Herbert Murerwa, and the Minister of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare, July Moyo yesterday. As part of the agreement, the WFP will increase its monthly food imports into Zimbabwe from 10,000 tons to 55,000 tons. The food is going to be shipped through East London and Durban in South Africa and Maputo and Beira in Mozambique. . . The President said the government was going to cooperate with the WFP and everybody who wants food would be fed regardless of the color of their skin, religious or political persuasion. 'We don't go that far with our politics,' he said. . . ."

SULLIVAN